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ABSTRACT

A symposium discussion of the use of the College Student Experiences Questionnaire (CSEQ) is presented. Intended for undergraduates at four-year colleges and universities, the CSEQ is a brief instrument that produces reliable and valid information for evaluation and assessment purposes. It asks students to indicate how often during the current school year they have engaged in various activities that are intended to contribute to their learning and development. Four institutions report on what they have done with the CSEQ at the local campus level. C. Robert Pace introduces the topic and the panelists. Papers are as follows: "Using the College Student Experiences Questionnaire in Large Research Universityies" (G. Roger Sell, Ohio State University); "Uses of the CSEQ at Towson State University" (Samuel T. Helms); "Uses of the College Student Experiences Questionnaire (CSEQ) in Institutional Research and Evaluation, Accreditation, and Assessment" (Martin A. Wilder, Mary Washington College, Virginia); and "Uses of the College Student Experiences Questionnaire in Institutional Research and Evaluation, Accreditation, and Assessment" (Allan O. Pfnister, University of Denver). The paper by Wilder is presented here in outline form. It contains some (but not all) of the tables prepared for the study. (SM)

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USES OF THE COLLEGE STUDENT EXPERIENCES

QUESTIONNAIRE

ASHE SYMPOSIUM

NOVEMBER 1988

HE 022 121

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ASHE ASSOCIATION FOR THE STUDY OF HIGHER EDUCATION

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This paper was presented at the annual meeting of the Association for the Study of Higher Education held at the Adam's Mark Hotel in St. Louis, Missouri, November 3-6, 1988. This paper was reviewed by ASHE and was judged to be of high quality and of interest to others concerned with the research of higher education. It has therefore been selected to be included in the ERIC collection of ASHE conference papers.

Opening Remarks by the Chairman: C. Robert Pace

ASHE Symposium: Uses of the College Student Experiences Questionnaire

November, 1988

If we agree that one of the purposes of measurement and evaluation, or of institutional research, or of college self-study, or of accreditation, or of assessment is **learning**, then we should think about those activities or topics in somewhat the same way that we think about learning.

If we agree on that, then the principles and procedures of good practice in evaluation, or self-study, or assessment would presumably be similar to the principles of good practice in learning and education. In other words, these enterprises or topics have in common a concern for aims, actions, and outcomes, or purpose, process, and product. So, the questions are: Who wants to learn what? And how is the process of evaluation or assessment managed so as to make it likely that the results of the learning or evaluation will be used to improve the person or the program?

One of the good things happening in assessment projects, according to Pat Hutchings, is that they are being designed and operated by the colleges as a worthwhile educational endeavor. They are not, as was feared and was sometimes true, done in a perfunctory manner to meet an externally imposed demand. They are, in other words, concerned with "who benefits?" and "how does one get and capitalize on the potential benefits?"

In the field of educational tests and measurement, the basic questions are about the instrument, about reliability and validity. In educational evaluation, the basic questions are about goals and about the judgments one makes as result of observation and measurement. Wise judgments need reliable and valid information, so evaluation or assessment cannot really be separated from measurement and observation.

The fact that there is a special emphasis on student outcomes coming from the state, the accrediting commissions, and others, means that there is a special emphasis on appropriate measurement or other indicators of outcomes. There are, in fact, lots of reliable and valid measuring instruments that have been produced over the years. But some of them have only marginal relevance to the goals and curricula of the colleges. This is especially true with respect to general educational and to the many non-cognitive outcomes of education. There are good achievement tests of knowledge about many of the academic disciplines.

But, increasingly I think, and especially in general education, knowledge is not organized around the traditional academic disciplines. National testing agencies are working to fill these gaps. And also, locally constructed measures are being encouraged and their construction is often aided by an institutional research office, or evaluation center, or assessment center. Trudy Banta's work at Tennessee is probably the best example of local initiative. In all those efforts the interest is, or should be, not just in the results of the tests or questionnaires, but also in how the results are used, and in identifying the experiences and conditions that contribute to the outcomes.

My impression from attending the first two national conferences on assessment and from reading about the third conference is that considerable interest has been generated in exchanging experiences about how assessment information has been used.

The symposium today focuses on what uses colleges have made of the College Student Experiences Questionnaire. The CSEQ is a brief instrument (about 40 minutes for students to fill it out) that produces reliable and valid information for evaluation and assessment purposes. It is intended for undergraduates at four-year colleges and universities. In the main part of the questionnaire students are asked to indicate about how often during the current school year they have engaged in various activities that are intended to contribute to their learning and development. It is an inventory of the amount, scope, and quality of effort (involvement) students put into using the resources and opportunities college provides. The questionnaire also asks students to characterize the college environment along several different dimensions. And, at the end, there is a list of 21 objectives, with students asked to indicate how much progress or gain they believe they have made toward each of the goals. Background information about the students and their status in college (year, residence, grades, full-time, transfer, etc.) are also obtained.

The CSEQ has been used by several hundred colleges and universities. The purpose of this symposium is to report some of the ways it has been used at the local campus level. As is often the case, people at one school don't know what people at other schools have done; but by better dissemination the values that might be obtained can be enhanced. It is at the local level, moreover, that attention to activities that might produce better results are focused.

I've asked four institutions to report what they have done. At Ohio State University, the initial use was in the self-study phase of an accreditation review. Having served that

purpose, the data base has been used for a number of special studies of particular interest to various campus groups. Roger Sell, Director of the Center of Teaching Excellence will describe those uses. At Towson State University, reported by Samuel Helms, Director of Institutional Research, and at Mary Washington College, reported by Martin Wilder, Associate Dean of Admissions, the CSEQ has been viewed as relevant to State-wide requirements for assessment. Both of these institutions are doing longitudinal studies of student development, and in both cases an interest in student retention is evident. Local dissemination of information has, in each case, led to discussions about program improvements. The University of Denver was concerned about the quality of student life and student attitudes about the institution. The CSEQ has provided the stimulus for many discussions by committees of faculty and administration. The Denver story, reported by Allan Pfnister, is a good example of how institutional research (locally initiated) can contribute to institutional reform.

USING THE COLLEGE STUDENT EXPERIENCES QUESTIONNAIRE IN LARGE RESEARCH UNIVERSITIES

G. Roger Sell
Center for Teaching Excellence
The Ohio State University

Background paper prepared for a symposium--Uses of the College Student Experiences Questionnaire in Institutional Research and Evaluation, Accreditation, and Assessment--presented at the Annual Meeting of the Association for the Study of Higher Education, St. Louis, Missouri, November 3-6, 1988.

Introduction

The Ohio State University undertook a self-study during 1985 and 1986 as part of a decennial accreditation review by the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools. In both briefings of institutional representatives preceding the accreditation review and in documents such as A Guide for Self-Study and Evaluation (1984), North Central stressed the importance of examining "student outcomes" as a part of assessing institutional accomplishments.

Like most colleges and universities, Ohio State routinely collects data to describe its students. For example, data are collected for describing who applies for admission, who is admitted, and who actually enrolls for classes; mathematics and English placement test scores; ACT and/or SAT scores; courses students enroll in; majors students select; grade point averages; and who stays and graduates. While some colleges, schools, and departments at the university collect standardized test results of students who major in their academic units, and a few have conducted followup studies of their graduates, there is generally little institution-wide evidence (beyond student ratings of teaching) to gauge the quality of education that students receive at the university or the educational outcomes of their experiences.

The remainder of this paper examines five questions:

1. Why did Ohio State select the College Student Experiences Questionnaire (CSEQ) as a "student assessment" instrument?

2. Which sampling procedures and methods were used in the collection of data using the CSEQ?

3. In what ways were CSEQ findings at Ohio State similar to or different from other research and doctoral institutions?

4. What did Ohio State do with findings from the CSEQ?

5. What were some of the major contributions of the CSEQ at Ohio State?

Selection of the CSEQ

Five student assessment instruments were examined to determine the most appropriate one(s) for Ohio State. These five were: the ACT Comp, ETS's Student Reactions to College, the Student Outcomes Service surveys of NCHEMS and the College Board, and Bob Pace's College Student Experiences Questionnaire.

The CSEQ was selected for two main reasons--its content and its ease of use. Of the five instruments, the content of the CSEQ best matched the institution's self-study information needs focusing on student assessment. These information needs included student demographics, student perceptions of institutional climate, student descriptions of the quality of their educational experiences, and student judgments of educational gains. The relative strength of the CSEQ is that it permits the collection and comparative analysis of these four sets of data, which are not available in any other one instrument. In addition, the CSEQ could be easily acquired and administered, not requiring special facilities or conditions for its administration. Equally important, distributors of the CSEQ provided efficient means for the scoring of completed questionnaires and provided the institution with a well-documented data tape of responses for additional local analyses.

Methodology

In January 1986, a CSEQ with a cover letter from the president of the university was mailed to a stratified random sample of all undergraduates on the Columbus campus of The Ohio State University. The sample was stratified by class (freshman through senior) and by major. Out of a total sample of 3,788 undergraduates enrolled in winter 1986, 1,244 returned completed questionnaires. While the return rate was only 33%, the demographic characteristics of respondents was very close to the total undergraduate population by class, major, gender and ethnic group. However, because nonrespondents were not systematically followed up, we cannot determine with precision the possible bias of the responses.

Overview of Findings

The undergraduate students completing the CSEQ at Ohio State generally responded similarly to undergraduates at other research and doctoral universities as reported by Pace (1984) in Measuring the Quality of College Student Experiences. However, to give a flavor of Ohio State student responses to the CSEQ, it is useful to examine some of the findings that were fully expected, some findings that were a bit surprising, and some findings that were unexpected.

Some Expected Findings

1. Educational gains were significantly associated with the quality of parallel experiences in several areas. For example, those who reported higher quality experiences in writing and science/technology also registered more gains in these areas.

2. Successive student classes (Fr., So., Jr., Sr.) showed a progression of self-reported gains across five goals areas--intellectual skills, personal/social development, vocational preparation, general education, and science/technology.

3. Majors in fields most closely aligned with certain educational gains reported significantly higher gains in those areas. For example, gains in science and technology were significantly higher for majors in biological sciences, computer science, engineering, and physical sciences.

Some Findings a Bit Surprising

1. Students who reported higher quality science/technology experiences tended to indicate not only larger gains in science/technology outcomes but also larger gains in intellectual skills such as the ability to put ideas together and to see relationships, ability to think analytically and logically, and quantitative thinking.

2. There was a strong association between the quality of personal experiences reported by students and their self-reported gains in understanding themselves and others, developing values and ethical standards, and ability to function as team members.

3. Although the self-reported gains of minority students as a group were not significantly different from those of nonminorities, minority students were generally less positive about college than white students and expressed more doubt about whether they would again choose to attend this college.

Some Unexpected Findings

1. No strong associations were found between the students' evaluation of the quality of library experiences or experiences with faculty and any of the 21 self-reported educational gains.

2. The quality of course learning experiences reported by students were not strongly asociated with any of their self-reported general education gains.

3. The quality of student conversations (both topics and depth of information) was found to be significantly related to more self-reported gains (9 out of 21 items) than any other set of student experiences. These significant items cut across gains in intellectual skills, personal/social development, general education, and science/technology.

Distribution and Discussion of CSEQ Findings

What was done with the data and findings from the CSEQ in addition to including them in the Ohio State self-study report for the accreditation review?

1. A summary report and detailed analyses were shared with two curriculum committees, one a university-wide review committee for general education and the other an arts and sciences curriculum committee. The findings were relevant to curriculum discussions in at least three ways. First, the results of the CSEQ confirmed that many undergraduate students were not experiencing or achieving significant objectives related to a model for undergraduate education in the university. Second, the categories of information reported for the CSEQ drew attention to the important differences between a focus on curriculum (goals and objectives), what students actually experience in the university, and the gains that students attribute to their college experiences. Third, the findings underscored the important contributions and complementarity of informal and out-of-class experiences to the general education development of students.

2. Each college dean received a detailed analysis of CSEQ findings for students majoring in programs offered by the college. The distribution of this information led to discussions about the effectiveness of particular instructional programs and what might be done in evaluating and developing courses for academic units.

3. A student retention committee, appointed by the provost, requested special analyses of the CSEQ data by racial/ethnic group. A review and discussion of these findings led to the construction of a more specific survey focused on black student retention.

Overall Contributions of the CSEQ

The use of the CSEQ at Ohio State cannot be directly linked to any particular reform. However, in retrospect, the CSEQ served five important purposes.

The CSEQ helped stimulate a dialogue on campus about such issues as the quality of education that students experience, the role of curriculum and instruction in meeting the student's general education needs, and the institutional climate for both students and faculty. Faculty and administrators and staff were brought together to talk seriously about the assessment of teaching and learning, and to examine evidence for discussing issues that transcend individual opinions and perceptions about what is happening to students.

A second benefit of using the CSEQ was that it raised questions about whether any single strategy (for example, a selective admission policy) could drive or determine the quality of education that the university seeks to provide. The CSEQ findings clearly show that quality of student effort, both in and out of class, plays a significant part in the educative process and the educational gains that students report.

A third benefit of using the CSEQ was a reexamination of institutional data bases and the need for refining and developing them to accommodate data about student outcomes and the quality of student educational experiences. Data structures, data definitions, and analyses of data for useful information are some of the topics related to these concerns. It became clear that those who collect, analyze, report, and use data related to the quality of education need to be engaged in an ongoing forum for the discussion of problems, ideas, and solutions related to these issues.

The CSEQ also provides the beginnings of a longitudinal data base for student assessment that can be enhanced over time. The autumn 1989 implementation of a new general education curriculum for undergraduates at Ohio State will provide another natural occasion for the readministration of the CSEQ. The CSEQ can be used to detect possible changes in the quality of student experiences and/or the educational gains that students report. One of the challenges will be to design studies with the CSEQ that point to sources of change as well as feedback that can be used for the improvement of institutional climate and programs.

Finally, and perhaps most importantly, a considerable number of students who responded to the CSEQ wrote notes indicating their appreciation for being able to complete the questionnaire and for its educational value in their own self-assessment. In many respects, this is the highest compliment that can be paid to the CSEQ or other instruments of its type.

ASHE Symposium

November 3, 1988

Uses of the CSEQ At Towson State University

Samuel T. Helms, Ph.D.
Institutional Research

I have been asked to discuss the ways that the College Student Experiences Questionnaire (CSEQ) is being used at Towson State University. I would like to first tell you about our school and then go through the series of events that led to the selection of the CSEQ as the instrument of choice for our student development research agenda.

Towson State University is located just north of Baltimore, Maryland. The school began as a teacher's college and eventually became a four year liberal arts college. Until this summer we were part of a six institution state college and university system. As of July 1 we became part of the University of Maryland System comprised of 11 institutions. Our campus is a comprehensive liberal arts university with a total enrollment of about 15,000 students. Approximately 9,500 of these are degree-seeking undergraduates. Each year we enroll about 1,500 new freshmen. Mass communication and business administration are by far the two most frequently declared undergraduate majors and fields of study for our bachelor degree recipients.

I arrived at TSU three years ago. At that time the campus

was using a patchwork longitudinal data system to keep track of its students. I was asked to design and implement a new longitudinal student tracking research data base. At the same time we were changing to a new computerized student information system, one developed by Information Associates. We now have all systems in place.

This tracking system identifies all freshmen, transfers, and graduate students entering TSU for the first time each fall semester. That group of students becomes our cohort for that semester, and each of the students is followed for a total of twelve semesters. Basic demographic and admissions information is extracted from the student information system at the time the cohort is created. Each subsequent semester, a new record is added for each student in the cohort. That new record contains data related to each student's current major, dorm residency, credits attempted, class year, and other term-related information. At the end of each semester, cumulative academic summary information is added to the data base.

This pool of information is restricted in the sense that it only includes data that were gathered during the admissions process and administrative data captured during each registration and grading period. The student development research agenda of the Office of Institutional Research could not depend on this information alone. We need to know more about the activities, opinions, abilities, preferences, and other

characteristics of our students if we are ever to make much headway in understanding the impact of college on their lives. We have been administering the ACE/CIRP Student Information Form to each incoming new freshman for several years. This gives us much more information about the freshmen but only at the point of entry.

We were also in need of an instrument that we could re-administer to the freshmen and transfer students of our cohort groups each year while they were progressing towards graduation. Among several instruments evaluated, we selected the CSEQ. We plan to use the CSEQ in a number of ways.

Some of my previous work in educational research involved testing hypotheses drawn from John Holland's theory of vocational development. That theory proposes that there are different types of people, different types of environments, and that behaviors are outcomes of interaction between people and environments. What we tend to look at are the effects of person-environment interactions. I view the CSEQ as an instrument well designed to measure the effects of students interacting mainly within an educational environment. Its strength is that the measures are based on events that happen once college begins. We can now go beyond analyzing exclusively input characteristics of students as a means of understanding retention. We will be looking for cross-sectional and longitudinal changes in the CSEQ scales among our students. Once trends are detected, we can explore the

nature of the TSU person-environment interaction with further detailed studies.

Another use we will make of the CSEQ results is that of evaluating the level of use of university facilities. There are two aspects of this. First, as our students progress towards graduation, we want to know whether they are using our facilities in more sophisticated ways -- that is, how are quality of effort scores changing. Secondly, the staff who are responsible for our facilities can better understand the ways that the facilities are being used. The CSEQ responses are expected to be much more informative than responses from instruments that just report the level of satisfaction that students perceive regarding specific facilities.

Since we have administered the CSEQ to both new freshmen and transfer students, we will be making comparisons between these two group. Of interest is, with some college experience behind them, whether transfer students compared to new freshmen differ in the ways they use campus facilities, perceive the TSU environment, and the goals they set for themselves. Also, after both groups have been at TSU for several semesters, we are eager to see in what ways the two groups become more like each other and the ways they remain different.

In Maryland, we are responding to a State mandate to develop

a campus assessment plan for evaluating student outcomes. The Assessment Committee will make recommendations to the Faculty Senate this spring. The committee chose to recommend the CSEQ as the instrument to assess non-cognitive aspects of student outcomes. The committee is particularly interested in using the CSEQ to monitor the level of satisfaction with college, the gains students self-report, and the amount of reading and writing in course work that is demanded of them. If possible, a values-added approach will be taken.

When the assessment plan goes into effect, the research agenda of the Office of Institutional Research will be coordinated with the assessment plan. The ultimate agenda is to combine questionnaire data with our longitudinal tracking system information. The resulting research data base can then be analyzed using statistical software packages to test hypotheses about student development at our school using a longitudinal tracking strategy.

To date we have administered the CSEQ twice to the Fall 1988 cohort. We will ask them to take it two more times. This spring we will begin asking the Fall 1988 cohort to complete the CSEQ for the next four spring semesters. Although every fall cohort is tracked for twelve semesters, only the even-year cohorts will be asked to respond to the CSEQ (1986, 1988, 1990, 1992, and so forth). This coming summer we hope to have the computer programs written that will begin to combine our tracking system data with questionnaire data.

Uses of the College Student Experiences Questionnaire (CSEQ) in Institutional Research and Evaluation, Accreditation, and Assessment

Association for the Study of Higher Education
St. Louis, Missouri
November 3, 1988

Martin A. Wilder, Jr.
Acting Vice President for Admissions and Financial Aid
Mary Washington College
Fredericksburg, Virginia 22401

Use of the CSEQ at Mary Washington College

I. Scope of the Survey

YEAR	STUDENTS SURVEYED	CLASSES SURVEYED	STUDENTS RESPONDING	
1986	1271	FR & SO	823	(65%)
1987	1260	FR-SR	787	(63%)
1988	1000	FR-SR	427	(43%)

II. Method of Administration

Distribute to residential students through residence hall directors. Mail to non-residential students. Hold instructional sessions with residence hall directors to inform them of purposes and procedures. Several collection points on campus. Follow-up with non-respondents by mail and through residence hall directors.

III. Purposes

A. Institutional Research: Need to better understand the intellectual and social experiences of students and to evaluate the institution's delivery systems.

B. Outcomes Assessment: State Council of Higher Education in Virginia (SCHEV) mandate to develop outcomes assessment plan for academic programs by 1987-88. Implementation of first phase of program in 1988-89.

C. Accreditation: Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS) requirements for assessment of institutional effectiveness. Requires assessment of academic programs and student development services. Requires plan for use of evaluation results.

IV. Types of Research Studies

A. Cross-Sectional (Comparisons of males and females, different class levels, etc.)

B. Longitudinal

1. Commitment to College and Student Involvement
2. Involvement and Developmental Outcomes
3. Attrition Studies
4. Pre-Enrollment Expectations and Gains in College

C. Specialized Studies (Computer Useage, Library Activities, etc.)

V. Dissemination of Data

A. Annual report to President and Cabinet Members
B. Reports to Individual Units on Campus (Academic Computer Center, Library, Writing Center, Student Affairs)
C. Reports to Committees (Recruitment and Retention, Social Life)
D. Feedback to Students (Campus Newspaper)

VI. Benefits

A. Reinforce What We Believe to be True/What We are Doing Well (i.e. Writing, Dormitory, Clubs & Organizations, interpersonal experiences, gains in general education)
B. Identify Weak Areas/Support Need for Change (i.e. involvement and gains in science and quantitative areas, student union)
C. Identify Areas Where Further Investigation is Needed (Use CSEQ data as departure point for other studies, such as Student Opinion Survey to explore administrative services)
D. Institutional Self-Examination helps us clarify our image and better communicate our unique identity.

VII. Future Goals

A. Incorporate assessment data into comprehensive, ongoing planning process.
B. Better coordination of assessment procedures and institutional goals.
C. More effective dissemination of results--directly to points where they can be utilized.
D. Establish appropriate support for institutional research activities.

Illustrative Samples of Results from CSEQ Studies

Table 1

Regression Summary for
Prediction of Student Involvement

	After Entry of Individual Background Variables				After Stepwise Entry of Pre-College Commitment Variables			
			Partial Correlations					
Criterion Var	R^2	F	Goal Commit	Inst Commit	Var to Enter	R^2 Change	R^2	F
ACADEMIC SCALES								
Library	.0791	3.15***	.093	.057	---	-----	---	----
Faculty	.0421	1.61	.215***	.000	Goal	.0441***	.0862	3.16***
Course Learn	.0566	2.20*	.286***	-.010	Goal	.0771***	.1337	5.17***
Writing	.0413	1.58	.195***	-.026	Goal	.0364***	.0778	2.82**
Sci/ Tech	.1750	7.77***	.113*	-.040	Goal	.0104*	.1854	7.62***
SOCIAL SCALES								
Art, Mu,Th	.0699	2.75**	.079	-.044	---	-----	---	----
Studnt Union	.0580	2.26*	.053	-.097	---	-----	---	----
Ath & Rec	.1546	6.70***	.008	-.049	---	-----	---	----
Clubs & Org	.0760	3.01**	.142**	.039	Goal	.0186**	.0946	3.50***
Persnl Exper	.0937	3.79***	.132**	.073	Goal	.0158**	.1095	4.12***
Studnt Acqunt	.0272	1.02	.157**	-.007	Goal	.0240**	.0511	1.82*
Dormitory	.0486	1.87*	.099*	.053	Goal	.0093*	.0579	2.06*
Topics Conver	.0300	1.13	.152**	.026	Goal	.0225**	.0526	1.86*
Info Conver	.0504	1.95*	.155**	-.037	Goal	.0229**	.0733	2.65**

*p< .05 **p<.01 ***p<.001

STRUCTURE OF THIS REPORT

The College Student Experiences Questionnaire contains nearly six pages of survey items which attempt to answer three basic questions. These are:

I. How do students spend their time and energy? (Student Involvement)
II. How do students view the college environment? (Student Perceptions)
III. What have students gained from the college experience? (Outcomes Assessment)

This report follows the structure of the CSEQ instrument, addressing each of the three questions in turn. The scores of Mary Washington College students are compared with those of a national norm group comprised of students from several comprehensive colleges and universities. (A listing of the institutions from which the normative data were drawn may be found in the appendix.) In addition, contrasts are made among various subgroups within the Mary Washington College sample. Specifically, the report examines differences between male and female students and students at different class levels.

Finally, a fourth section of this report explores interrelationships among the three primary elements of the survey--involvement, perceptions, and outcomes. This is an especially important analysis, as it may help us to understand which factors are associated with desired educational outcomes.

Table 2

1987 CSEQ Activity Scales:
Comparison of Mary Washington College Scores
with National Norms

Activities Scale	Possible Range	National Norms for Comprehensive Institutions Mean	Std. Dev.	Mary Washington College Mean	Std. Dev.
(ACADEMIC AREAS)					
Library Experiences	(10-40)	20.0	4.9	20.0	4.5
Experiences with Faculty	(10-40)	20.4	5.5	20.8	5.5
Course Learning	(10-40)	29.2	5.1	29.2	5.0
Experiences in Writing	(10-40)	25.7	5.9	27.0**	5.4
Science/Technology	(12-48)	22.8**	7.3	21.7	6.9
(SOCIAL AREAS)					
Art, Music, Theatre	(12-48)	19.4	6.1	20.9**	5.8
Student Center/Union	(10-40)	20.3**	6.3	18.8	5.7
Athletic & Recreation	(10-40)	18.3	7.3	18.5	6.9
Clubs and Organizations	(10-40)	19.2	7.2	22.7**	7.0
Personal Experiences	(10-40)	22.1	5.9	24.0**	5.4
Student Acquaintances	(10-40)	25.0	6.5	26.8**	5.9
Dormitory	(10-40)	24.9	7.2	27.5**	5.9
Topics of Conversation	(12-48)	28.7	6.0	29.7**	5.2
Information in Conversations	(6-24)	14.5	3.0	14.4	3.0

Table 3

1987 CSEQ Activity Scales:
Comparison of Mary Washington College Scores
for Male and Female Students

Activities Scale	Possible Range	Males Mean	Males Std. Dev.	Females Mean	Females Std. Dev.
(ACADEMIC AREAS)					
Library Experiences	(10-40)	19.6	4.7	20.1	4.5
Experiences with Faculty	(10-40)	20.1	5.2	20.9	5.5
Course Learning	(10-40)	26.7	5.0	29.6**	4.9
Experiences in Writing	(10-40)	24.7	5.7	27.4**	5.3
Science/Technology	(12-48)	22.5	7.7	21.6	6.8
(SOCIAL AREAS)					
Art, Music, Theatre	(12-48)	20.1	5.8	21.0	5.8
Student Center/Union	(10-40)	18.2	5.4	18.9	5.8
Athletic & Recreation	(10-40)	21.3**	6.8	18.1	6.8
Clubs and Organizations	(10-40)	20.8	7.7	22.9**	6.9
Personal Experiences	(10-40)	20.5	5.1	24.6**	5.2
Student Acquaintances	(10-40)	26.5	5.9	26.9	5.9
Dormitory	(10-40)	26.7	6.3	27.7	5.9
Topics of Conversation	(12-48)	28.9	5.5	29.8	5.2
Information in Conversation	(6-24)	14.2	3.1	14.4	3.0

* $p < .05$ ** $p < .01$

Table 8

1987 CSEQ Estimates of Gains:
Percentage of Students Reporting Substantial Gains

	Norms	MWC	Difference
GENERAL EDUCATION:			
Art, Music, and Drama	62%	68%	[+6%]**
Literature	32%	37%	[+5%]**
Writing	56%	59%	[+3%]
General Education	66%	80%	[+14%]**
Awareness of Philosophies	44%	48%	[+4%]
INTELLECTUAL SKILLS:			
Analytical & Logical Thinking	59%	55%	(-4%)
Quantitative Thinking	44%	34%	(-10%)**
Ability to Synthesize Ideas	68%	67%	(-1%)
Independent Learning	79%	78%	(-1%)
SCIENCE/TECHNOLOGY/COMPUTERS:			
Understanding Nature of Science	32%	26%	(-6%)**
New Sci. & Tech. Developments	27%	19%	(-8%)**
Awareness of Consequences of Sci.	31%	22%	(-9%)**
Familiarity with Computers	28%	25%	(-3%)
VOCATIONAL PREPARATION:			
Vocational Training	48%	32%	(-16%)**
Specialization for Further Educ.	57%	50%	(-7%)**
Gaining Career Information	69%	64%	(-5%)**
PERSONAL/SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT:			
Developing Own Values & Ethics	62%	68%	[+6%]**
Self-Understanding	75%	78%	[+3%]
Understanding Other People	77%	86%	[+9%]**
Functioning as a Team Member	60%	57%	(-3%)
Developing Good Health Habits	47%	42%	(-5%)**

Table 13

1987 CSEQ Results:
Correlations Between Involvement and Outcomes

	Outcomes Scales				
	Gen. Ed.	Intel. Skills	Sci/ Tech.	Voc. Prep.	Pers/ Social
Activities Scales					
Library Experiences	.26	.19	.09	.14	.17
Exper. w/ Faculty	.26	.28	.18	.28	.23
Course Learning	.23	.37	.23	.23	.27
Exper. in Writing	.21	.23	.11	.12	.22
Science/Technology	-.05	.31	.60	.21	.09
Art, Music, Theatre	.36	.08	-.03	.03	.08
Student Center/Union	.18	.16	.04	.13	.22
Athletic & Recreation	.03	.10	.16	.09	.27
Clubs & Organizations	.31	.25	.01	.21	.29
Personal Experiences	.20	.17	.03	.06	.27
Student Acquaintances	.23	.17	.07	.10	.25
Dormitory	.17	.21	.07	.14	.38
Topics of Conversation	.34	.30	.25	.18	.27
Info. in Conversations	.31	.33	.18	.17	.30

Table 14

1987 CSEQ Results:
Correlations Between Environment Ratings and Outcomes

	Outcomes Scales				
	Gen. Ed.	Intel. Skills	Sci/ Tech.	Voc. Prep.	Pers/ Social
Environment Ratings					
Overall Satisfaction Index	.30	.22	.11	.29	.32
Emphasis on academic, scholarly, and intellectual qualities	.15	.17	.09	.17	.20
Emphasis on developing esthetic, expressive, & creative qualities	.27	.16	.07	.19	.24
Emphasis on being critical, evaluative, and analytical	.30	.25	.13	.21	.22
Development of vocational & occupational competency	.11	.10	.11	.30	.16
Emphasis on the personal relevance and practical value of your courses	.25	.23	.15	.35	.27
Relationships with other students, student groups, and student activities	.24	.20	.15	.25	.36
Relationships with faculty members	.31	.26	.13	.29	.25
Relationshops with administration personnel	.12	.08	.05	.16	.19

Mary Washington College
College Student Experiences Questionnaire

Three-Year Longitudinal Study of Gains in College
(Percentage of Students Reporting Substantial Gains)

	Freshman Year	Sophomore Year	Junior Year
GENERAL EDUCATION:			
Art, Music, and Drama	29%	39%	73%
Literature	28%	41%	42%
Writing	52%	58%	62%
General Education	67%	79%	88%
Awareness of Philosophies	40%	47%	47%
INTELLECTUAL SKILLS:			
Analytical & Logical Thinking	43%	54%	63%
Quantitative Thinking	22%	36%	45%
Ability to Synthesize Ideas	56%	67%	74%
Independent Learning	73%	79%	83%
SCIENCE/TECHNOLOGY/COMPUTERS:			
Understanding Nature of Science	21%	25%	29%
New Sci. & Tech. Developments	14%	19%	23%
Awareness of Consequences of Sci.	17%	23%	25%
Familiarity with Computers	17%	20%	40%
VOCATIONAL PREPARATION:			
Vocational Training	19%	36%	47%
Specialization for Further Educ.	40%	59%	68%
Gaining Career Information	55%	67%	78%
PERSONAL/SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT:			
Developing Own Values & Ethics	60%	66%	73%
Self-Understanding	73%	78%	82%
Understanding Other People	77%	86%	93%
Functioning as a Team Member	49%	56%	57%
Developing Good Health Habits	48%	45%	44%

EXPECTATIONS FOR THE COLLEGE EXPERIENCE
AND FRESHMAN YEAR GAINS

	Expected Gain		Reported Gain (CSEQ)	
	Mean	Rank	Mean	Rank
Ability to learn on your own, pursue ideas and find information you need	3.6	(1)	3.0	(2)
Personal and social development --understanding yourself and others	3.5	(2)	(S) 3.0 (O) 3.3	(1)
Developing your own values and ethical standards	3.4	(3)	2.8	(4)
Writing clearly and effectively	3.4	(3)	2.4	(8)
Gaining a broad general education about different fields of knowledge	3.4	(3)	2.9	(3)
Ability to put ideas together, to see relationships, similarities and differences between ideas	3.3	(6)	2.7	(5)
Ability to think analytically and logically	3.2	(7)	2.6	(6)
Vocational or career training	2.9	(8)	1.8	(12)
Becoming aware of different philosophies, cultures, and ways of life	2.9	(8)	2.5	(7)
Broadening your acquaintance and enjoyment of literature	2.9	(8)	2.1	(9)
Acquiring familiarity with the use of computers	2.7	(11)	1.5	(13)
Understanding the nature of science and experimentation	2.7	(11)	2.0	(10)
Developing an understanding and enjoyment of art, music, and drama	2.4	(13)	2.0	(10)
AVERAGE RATING	3.1		2.47	

ASSOCIATION FOR THE STUDY
OF HIGHER EDUCATION

St. Louis, Missouri
November 3-6, 1988

Concurrent Sessions II, E. Uses of the College
Student Experiences Questionnaire
in Institutional Research
and Evaluation,
Accreditation,
Assessment

Panelist: Allan O. Pfnister, University of Denver

I. The Setting

The University of Denver is a medium-sized research university with an enrollment of over 7,000 students, one-half of whom are undergraduates and one-half are post-baccalaureate professional and graduate students. The University is the oldest higher institution in Colorado, founded in 1864, twelve years before the territory became a state. The University is comprised of five undergraduate units -- the Faculties of Arts and Humanities, Social Sciences, Natural Sciences, Mathematical and Computer Sciences, and Business Administration, and six graduate units -- Graduate School of Business and Public Management, Graduate School of International Studies, Graduate School of Social Work, College of Law, College of Human Services, College of Systems Science. The four undergraduate faculties also offer graduate work at the Master's and Doctoral level.

The year 1984-85 was one of crisis for the University. The Chancellor of seven years was released by action of the Board of Trustees. An interim administration was put in charge of the University during the Winter Quarter, and a sweeping reorganization instituted following an institutional review undertaken during the Spring and Summer Quarters. The University began the Fall Term, 1984, with decisions to phase out the graduate program in Library Science, the undergraduate and graduate program in Theatre, the undergraduate program in nursing. Reductions in the total faculty were undertaken. The College of Arts and Sciences was restructured into four faculties, each headed by a Dean. A new undergraduate College was created to coordinate a University-wide undergraduate core program. The University indebtedness had gotten out of hand, and cost-cutting efforts were underway throughout the University.

The new core program under The College was introduced in September 1985 consisting of a block of interdisciplinary courses required of all students; students had limited freedom in selecting courses from the broad areas of knowledge--humanities, social sciences, natural sciences, mathematics.

The College Student Experiences Questionnaire

With all of the changes taking place, restructuring and rebuilding, it was important that the University have a clear understanding of how students were responding to the new situations. The organization of the university was changing. Rumors abounded regarding the nature of the reorganization. How were enrolled and applying students viewing the developments?

The Office of the Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs and the Dean of Admission were particularly concerned both from the perspective of recruiting new students and retaining enrolled students. The Chancellor for Academic Affairs was concerned from the perspective of instituting new academic programs and developing more effective advising. The initial plans for a university-wide study were developed by the Admission Office under the direction of Student Affairs.

A series of retention studies had been undertaken over the years, but the developments of 1983-84 seemed to be creating such a new environment that a new study seemed appropriate and needed. The College Student Experiences Questionnaire was early selected as one of the major assessment devices. The questionnaire was used in the Spring of 1984 and of 1985. In the initial administration in 1984, A randomized sample was identified and 337 usable questionnaires returned. The basic analysis was undertaken by the Office of Admission. The findings were shared in special meetings with the Vice Chancellors, and other key administrative offices. Bob Pace came to the campus to discuss some of the implications of the findings. A comprehensive written report was fairly widely circulated.

Some of the Findings

The Questionnaire asks students to report frequency of activities (very often, often, occasionally, never) in a variety of settings to provide clues on how students become involved in the environment of the institution and to find out how students characterize the college environment. Responses at a given instsitution may be compared with responses at similar institutions.

One of the areas in which a consistently higher proportion of University of Denver students reported contacts (compared with other doctoral universities) was "Experiences with Faculty." For example two thirds of the DU students talked "very often" or "often" with faculty compared with 40 percent in other doctoral universities. Twice the proportion discussed career plans with faculty, etc. On the other hand, interaction with groups of other students were significantly lower; there seemed to be less a sense of campus community. Yet, a high proportion of the students reported being enthusiastic about college. Fewer characterized the college environment as "intellectual" and "critical analytical." In estimates of gains (to what extent have

do you feel you have gained or made progress) the DU students roughly paralleled those at other institutions except in science and technology and science and experimentation.

Applications

The profiles were discussed at length by the Senior Staff (Chancellor's Cabinet), the individual offices (Academic Affairs, Student Affairs, Admissions) and contributed in significant ways to shaping programming and recruiting. The Summer Orientation, Advising and Registration (SOAR) program under which admitted students visit the campus with parents during the summer immediately preceding enrollment (or attend special meetings in several locations off-campus) incorporated to a greater degree faculty to capitalize on the strength of faculty-student contacts perceived by enrolled students.

An important activity introduced with the new Core Curriculum is the Freshman Experience. This has become a year-long series of small-group meetings of students during their first year at the University, in which a mentor (faculty or staff) holds discussions relating to various aspects of the university and university life and includes dinner meetings at the mentor's home. The mentor serves as an advisor to the student until the student has identified as a major in a department or college. In addition the Dean of the College (the administrative unit for the Core) has developed a staff of advisors to supplement and complement the group of mentors for the Freshman Experience.

Indeed, the advising program for the undergraduate students has undergone significant changes since 1984. While the review of the results of the CSEQ cannot be credited for all of the changes, the CSEQ highlighted concerns to be addressed. During the past two summers special workshops have been developed for the Freshman Experience advisors, and a modest stipend has been provided for participation in the workshop and leading the Freshman Experience.

Efforts of the Admission Office have been influenced by what we found out through the CSEQ and other studies conducted at the same time.

A core course dealing with the impact of technology has been introduced, and there is heavy emphasis on laboratory experience in the science core courses.

More stress is being placed on selectivity, academic challenge and rigor in recruitment.

The institutional research office has been more clearly identified with the chief academic officer of the university and considerable progress had been made to developing the kind of data base that assists more directly in planning/decision-making.